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Gill, Thomas Patrick

Education & citizenship, with special reference...

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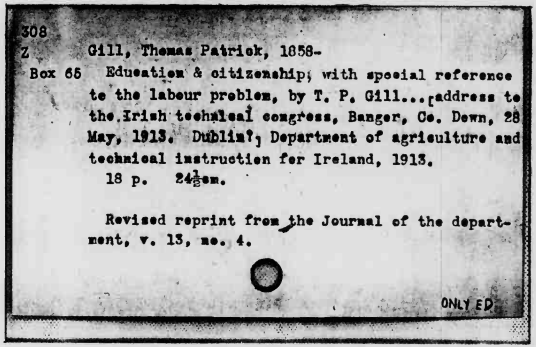
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EDUCATION & CITIZENSHIP:

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE LABOUR PROBLEM

BY

T. P. GILL,

Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland; Commissioner for Intermediate Education; Member of the Senate of the National University, etc.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION FOR IRELAND, 1913.

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NOTE.

Since this address was delivered the labour troubles which have broken out in the city and county of Dublin have given a point of actuality to its argument. Needless to say, however, one will search it in vain for a specific remedy for present ills—it merely discusses a form of preventive treatment. It was addressed only to people who are concerned in the Department's technical instruction schemes and with the purpose of promoting a definite piece of educational work. But the general idea behind it, the idea that education has something to do for the labour problem, this being now largely a psychological and moral problem, has a wider reach, and, apart from their particular applications, some of the points mentioned may be of interest at present.

DUBLIN, *November*, 1913.

14 Feb. 1920 - E.R.W.

EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE LABOUR PROBLEM.

BY

T. P. GILL.

[Address to the Irish Technical Congress, Bangor, Co. Down, 28 May, 1913. Revised reprint from the JOURNAL of the Department, Vol. XIII., No. 4.]

Last year at Cork, when speaking of preparation for industrial life, I ventured to put before the Congress a line of reform in which I thought an advance might be made. That was in the case of the great body of pupils whose schooling has to finish at or before the age of sixteen in order that they may go out and earn their living. This is the class we have most to deal with in our evening technical schools and our winter agricultural classes, and we are acutely aware of the defects in their education. The majority of the pupils of our Intermediate schools belong to this class; and the point I pressed for consideration as one of national urgency was that our Intermediate schools should take note of this fact in the life-history of the majority of their pupils, the fact that they have to leave school at or before sixteen. I urged that our Intermediate schools should take more note of this and of other realities affecting these pupils, and should shape their courses of instruction so as to help and prepare them for the careers before them, and cease imposing courses on them which not only do not prepare but even tend to unfit them for these careers, and spoil and waste their few short years of day-school education, the only years of day-school education such pupils—I repeat the majority of their pupils—can ever have. I only refer to this subject now in order to mention the fact that the Intermediate Board, in so far as the problem rests with them, have given some thought to the case of this class of pupils during the past year. Although not able as yet to go so far as one might have hoped, and as one hopes they will yet go—reforms of this kind are not easily managed—still I am glad to think the Board will be able to make some improvement affecting the case of a certain number of this class of pupils during the coming year. There is very much to be said on this subject yet, but I am not going to refer to it further now, as I hope that that reform is at any rate under weigh.

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I wish to speak of another matter to-day—to set going, if I may,

another idea for work with which I hope it may be possible to make some progress during the coming year. And to this matter I would respectfully ask the attention of employers and workers and their leaders, as well as of the committeemen and teachers of our technical schools. The concrete objective, as a medium for carrying out the idea, is to introduce into our technical schools a course of what, for want of a more convenient title, I will call, as it is often called, "citizenship"—that is, the knowledge which the citizen ought to have of the society in which he lives and of his own place in that society, and of the obligations mutually involved from him to society and from society to him; or a course through which such teaching could be given even indirectly. Such a course would include some teaching—elementary in the main it would have to be, but it would be none the less effective for its purpose—of economics and administration and of the history of the institutions under which industry and government are carried on in a State. If the course is given in the right spirit by the teacher, and if the pupils have come, as they now do from our Irish schools, with a good religious and moral foundation, its results will be mainly ethical. This ethical result, fortified by the intellectual quickening, will, in my opinion, have a most profound value for society. The problems of industrial and democratic society to-day, foremost amongst them the labour problem, are now, at least so it seems to me, even more a psychological and moral than they are a social and economic problem. Now, such a course as that is not only possible for our technical schools—it can be fitted into their curriculum with ease; they have the teachers who should be able to give it, those commercial teachers whom we have specially trained in economics and administration—it is not only possible but I say deliberately it is necessary that our technical schools should provide it. Until they do they are only doing half their duty by the students who come to them for educational help and by the community, local and national, by whom they are maintained. Moreover, while such teaching, in some form, should have a place in all our schools, and I hope one day will have a place in all our schools, it is in the technical school, for reasons to which I will refer later, that it can be given with most direct effect to the pupils concerned, and upon the technical school lies the most direct obligation to give it. At this point I fancy I perceive a query arising in the minds of my hearers: If you think this class of instruction so vital why have you not introduced it before now, thirteen years after we have been at work on technical education? Perhaps, in a parenthesis, I had better deal with that query here and get it out of the way. My answer is a simple one—simply that, in education, construction to be sound must be gradual—you must wait till the occasion suits. Anything else is jerry-building. Moreover, personally I have on many occasions before now given warning

of this idea—the idea of the civic side of technical training. I devoted my address at our Sligo Congress three years ago largely to it. The idea has a place in the first annual report of the Department. But the time is now ripe as it was not earlier; we have got other things done and can give some attention to this.

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How can I, without disproportion, express my sense of the profound significance of this simple matter—about which, I need hardly say, there is nothing new. All sorts of attempts have been made in recent times to fabricate courses of "civics" and "citizenship," for the need has been widely, though more or less vaguely, perceived—there have been many gropings after the idea (as old as Aristotle) of inculcating through education some understanding and active sense in the citizen of his duties as well as his rights. The only novelty about the idea here is the state of circumstances in which we may introduce it. We have an unusual facility, it seems to me, here in Ireland, in handling the matter well, in the system of technical instruction which has now been organised and in the still unspoiled minds and consciences of the pupils with whom we have to deal. And, further, it is *felix opportunitate*. Never was such teaching more clearly called for by the conditions of a time. We are all, according to our dispositions and points of view, stirred or alarmed by many of the manifestations of the tide of social and industrial unrest which is now in such agitation all over the world and which Ireland has not escaped—of course has not escaped. We see and hear on every hand the class war, the threatening and rumblings almost of revolution, the visionary ideas, the appeals to cupidity, the black passions on one side and the other, the ugliness, the mischief and the suffering wrought in so many ways. This goes on side by side with immense industrial development and great advances in scientific and technical knowledge and in popular freedom and power, none of which things seems as yet to have made the air any clearer or the souls of men any less unpoised. The truth is, of course, that we are still passing through one of the great transitional periods of history, and the function of the statesman and of the educationist, whose duty it is to look at things as a statesman, is to adjust and steady ideas as far as he can, so as to avert as much wreckage during the passage as is possible and to lead to the largest harvest of good for all concerned when peace and the dawn of the new day arrive. It is this perception which has forced, as a sheer necessity, upon those who have been working at the problem in various ways, in universities and elsewhere, the notion that we must provide the pupils of our colleges and schools—and, perhaps, especially those of them who will be engaged in industrial business—with some working equipment for

understanding the movement of the time and for finding their bearings in it.

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I would like you to contemplate two cases in particular—the young working-man and the young employer.

The former is my more particular concern for the moment. Consider the young worker in one of your workshops here in Belfast, the type who ought to be the chief concern of the technical school. What are the ideas he comes in contact with when he has left school and gone to earn his living? They are the ideas in their crudest form of labourism, socialism, syndicalism, and even anarchism. Now, I am not here discussing the merits of any of these ideas or their advocates. I am only pointing out what happens. You follow that young worker, and apart from his amusements, the nature of which I do not now discuss either, you will find that a good deal of his leisure and even of his working time is given to imbibing into the vacant spaces of his mind from his comrades in the workshop, from speakers on the Custom House steps, or from labour or socialist papers, a confused medley of this category of ideas. The main effect upon him is to fill him not merely with discontent, for the discontent which leads one to endeavour to improve his lot is a good thing, but with envy, and sometimes even with a dislike of work, a sense that to have to work is a grievance, and a conviction that he has many rights of which he is deprived—a just conviction, it may be, but untempered by any equally sharp conviction of duties and aggravated by the belief that these rights are only to be won by conflict. There is a tendency to confuse privileges with rights and there is a constant dulling of the sense of discipline. That is the state of mind towards which he inevitably moves; and I say that unless your school provides him with some means or some standard by which he is to judge the ideas he is called on to examine or to accept, it is not doing its duty either to him or to society. It is leaving him forlorn in presence of a great danger; it is allowing him, under the influence of unreal conceptions of things, to drift towards the possible ruin of his own happiness and potentially to add his force to the forces which menace society. Again, let me repeat that I am not calling in question the validity of the doctrines taught or taking my place on one side or the other of these issues. I am not speaking for or against the doctrines. That is not my business here. It is not his acceptance of a given doctrine after he has weighed and examined it with some competence of judgment that I question. What I call in question is the ultimate effect produced on the unprepared mind of the young working-man by the necessarily crude and passionate exposition of these doctrines to which he has to listen. It is his unpreparedness for what he meets all around him outside the walls of the school,

and the unpreparedness, moreover, of the comrade who may become his leader, which I am pointing out.

Let us turn, on the other hand, to the young employer. Is he, in his way, any better prepared for facing the problems presented to him by this movement of our time, or are the ideas to which he listens in his environment much better adjusted to the realities of things or much freer, making all allowances, from class prejudice? Of course his educational opportunities have been larger, and his environment has a wider outlook and a greater sense of responsibility. But in nine cases out of ten the young employer has had, in his school or his college, no better direct training for thinking beyond the narrower interests, or seeming interests, of his class upon the rights and duties of the citizen and upon his own particular responsibilities, or for testing or correcting the ideas he may find immediately around him in his own class, or for rebutting, if he wants to rebut, the ideas of those who have the ear of his workers, than has had the young worker at the bench or the loom. Just as there are ideas of labourism in a crude form, so there are ideas of capitalism in a crude form, and I venture to say that the ignorance of his social and economic function, of his relationship to the body politic and the obligations it entails, in which the young man of the employer class is usually brought up constitutes as great a danger to himself and to society as does the ignorance of the worker—possibly a greater. There may be added to it the educational neglect in the same particular of the comfortable classes generally, who have so little direct acquaintance with the lives of the poor to make up in some way for this lack of training, and who often appear callous when they are only uninstructed. The labour leaders of every type are quite aware of this lack and even boast of it. They themselves have many able men amongst them, able with tongue and pen, who have equipped themselves for the controversy as they conceive it—a makeshift and partisan equipment in most cases, no doubt, but still a conscious attempt at an equipment. They have clever journals in the press which circulate widely amongst the workers. They have the workers in their hands, and—whether their ideas are right or wrong—there are no other leaders in the field competing with them able to reach or to convince the workers' mind. I was reading the other day a speech of a well-known labour leader in Ireland, and here is what he said: "There was not a man amongst their enemies who was able and capable enough to argue economic questions with the recognised leaders of the movement. There was not a man from (and here he mentioned several of our public men of note on both sides of politics) or any of the leaders of public opinion in Ireland who could do it." You see this boast of the unpreparedness of everybody else to meet these leaders in economic or social controversy, because of what they believe to be

their superior equipment—and the rather touching faith in the efficacy of this equipment. I would underscore this feature and ask your particular attention to it, for it lends significant point to what I say.

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I am speaking, I say, of results, not doctrines, and results which everyone may deplore no matter what his doctrine. What I am pointing to, as most needing adjustment, are attitudes and states of mind. Let me make myself clear, if I can, in this very complex matter. This great movement of things belonging to our time is bound to go on; and just as we have the aeroplane, wireless telegraphy, the motor-car, and the cinematograph, and as we had before them the steam engine, the steamship, and the electric telegraph, all of which are part of the social and economic movement, among its causes and effects, so we have the labour leader and the captain of industry, the trade union and the employers' federation, the trust and the "trust buster," the syndicalist, the socialist, the sweater, the manipulator of the money market. Most of these things are inevitable and others to follow them in the process of change. They are to be experienced whether we like it or not. They belong to human nature and many of them are only new manifestations of old things. It is part of sane action to recognise them for what they are: to take precautions on the one hand against the habit of seeing them, in panic, as figures in a phantasmagoria of revolution and, on the other, against blind enthusiasms for change itself. There are fundamental things which change must not affect, principles, laws, which hold civilised society together, upon which individual and communal welfare absolutely depend—things, most of them, to be apprehended with the conscience as well as with the understanding. If these are lost sight of and go down, great indeed may be the mischief before the righting comes. But if these principles are distinguished amidst the welter and held to and made prevail, then the nature of change will be different and need not be feared. The movement will right itself in the long run, as all such movements do, and society will wonder to find itself sound and whole like Gloster after his fall from Dover cliff. Here is where education comes in to do its share. It can make these fundamental principles better understood and show their adaptation to the new conditions; and it works deeply, for it is bringing out the hidden forces of mind and soul. And here—in the midst of this state of things by which all are affected and in which the young man starting life is bound to be caught up by one or other stream of action or ideas—is where the technical school has to fulfil a particular function of great importance. It can humanise, enlighten and prepare its student in a very special way for the

experience which lies before him—or rather it can continue, with an advantage and an effect of its own, the humanising and preparing which other schools should begin for him.

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Let us turn to the technical school. My point is that it must now begin to take express note of this part of its function for its student as well as of the purely technological part. Its power is immense; we are only at the beginning of it. The technical school is going to be the great lever for establishing the true self-respect of the working-man; it is going to be this through its special mission of intellectualising and dignifying manual labour; and in establishing his true self-respect it is moving and fortifying within him a true sense of responsibility. This process is in daily operation, as all observers of technical instruction know. But it is more or less unconsciously in operation. The school is more or less unconscious of it, and so is the worker. While improving his skill of hand and eye, awakening his intellect to the arts and sciences underlying his calling, awakening his sense of beauty and order, teaching him the great truth that manual labour need not be a drudgery, but may be a noble art with mind and soul behind it, an essential part of life, while doing all this for him in the simple course of evening classes, the technical school does not always realise, and neither does the worker, that it is doing its share in developing a new human being, with broadened outlook and strengthened character, and that it is helping to make not only a better worker but a better citizen and a better man. And, of course, when I speak of the technical school here, I use the term in its full meaning: all that I say applies to the worker in agricultural callings, the great skilled callings of the farmer, the husbandman, the agricultural labourer; and all that I say applies to what we do through technical instruction for the women, whether as housewives or wage-earners. I say I want the technical school to take more conscious note of this part of its influence. The formation of character is the true end of all education, technical and other, the bedrock upon which the foundations of the State must be laid and upon which it is the duty of education to help the State to lay its foundations. Now, next to religion itself there is no part of education which can have so powerful an effect upon character as that part of it which takes a young man just as he is facing with some bewilderment and misgiving the battle of life, makes of his calling a power in his hands, and by giving him a noble understanding of it makes him love and rejoice in the labour by which he is to earn his bread. The technical school thus has a great leverage and, if it begins to add to its student's equipment some knowledge of citizenship, some knowledge of the social and economic structure in which he lives, that knowledge

will come upon a mind which can make a wholesome use of it, and that student, that worker, so equipped by his technical school, while founding his own welfare securely, and while taking his right place in the organisations of his trade or calling, will become a safeguard of society and industry instead of a potential menace to it.

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I must labour a little this point of the peculiar mission of the technical school for the modern working-man, for I am convinced we have not yet begun to understand it as we must. Before our time, when a boy left school to be bound to a trade his education was continued in the workshop of his master and afterwards through the craft guild. He was subject to the authority of his master, under his written indentures, not only in respect of his trade but in everything; and the master was bound not only to teach him the "art and mystery" of his trade but to see to his bringing up in every way so that he might be fitted ultimately to become a worthy member of his craft and a proper citizen. In the workshop of his master, and in the household and family of his master, in his year of travelling to learn something of his trade in other places (his travelling scholarship as it were), in the hall of his guild after he had been admitted as a journeyman, and later after he had been admitted, on presenting his "masterpiece," to his master's degree, in all this experience the working-man of the past found a school of arts and crafts and conduct and, besides, of civics and economics suited to the society of his time; he got an understanding of the society of his time and of his place in it; he was in contact with a body of balanced and effective ideas. If you want to find the secret of the dignity of the mediæval craftsman and of the independence and valour of the mediæval burgess you will find some of that secret in what was thus borne in upon him during his process of technical education.

Now, modern industry, with its mechanical inventions, it specialisations and its combinations of capital, and modern democracy, between them have broken up that system. Only a sort of wreckage remains. We cannot restore it. We cannot get back if we would the apprenticeship exactly as it was or the craft guild as it was. We must be of our time; and our time, let us not forget, which is a great time, has its own merits (as other times had their own drawbacks). But we can recapture some of the old spirit and purpose, the essential and the permanent in it, doing as an architect does who preserves the fine features of an old building when raising around it a new one. Indeed, there is no other way of construction in this field—where human nature and tradition are so much concerned, when something has been destroyed, building must always involve some rebuilding. To put it otherwise, it is a case of adjusting essentials which do not change to conditions which have changed much.

We must, then, in our education of the working-man achieve the same end for him as before, but in a way according with the conditions of our own time, the end of making him a master of his craft and a proper citizen; and what we have to grasp is that in modern conditions it is the technical school which has to take the place, in the education of the working-man, and even more than the place, of the master's workshop and of the art and mystery of the guild. This fact, belonging to the industrial change and belonging to the change in the social and political status of labour, for which education must equally prepare him, is one of the chief realities of life for the modern worker. One reality of life for him is that he must cease his day-school education at or before the age of sixteen—a reality on which I have already spoken to you and which I am in hopes of seeing better understood soon; another of his life's realities, the one I am pointing to here, is that after he has left the day-school the only regular school at which he can or will continue his education is the evening technical school. The technical school is the modern working-man's professional college; it is even his university—a place of learning through which he can carry his development very far—it is his very own university, and to get him to realise this ownership and its significance for him is part of our task. The exceptional son may go elsewhere, may be attracted by "educational ladders" and the like away from the ranks of labour; with the exceptional person whose ambition is to climb out of his class I am not concerned here; but for the worker himself the road of development, after his day-school, is the technical school. For him, the man of his hands, whom society will always need and whom society must learn rightly to honour, for the great class and army of labour there is another ambition than leaving the class of manual workers—not an inferior but a far greater ambition. It is to have the class itself uplifted and, as it were, ennobled. This is the ambition with which you of the technical schools are concerned. You have to foster it, to guide it, to give it material to work upon. It is for the technical school—aided and prepared for, as I hope will be the case, by his day-school when that school too has caught the right conception of its duty to him—it is for the technical school to help the manual worker to rid himself of the false and slavish shame which makes him so often despise his calling and envy other people's, and to substitute for that shame a pride in his place in the body politic and in the work he does. To substitute for it not an overweening, ignorant pride, but a civil, instructed and self-respecting pride, which understands and respects, exacting the like understanding and respect in return, the place and the function of the various other sorts of people that it takes to make a world. We must create the gentleman of labour. The technical school has the first of the levers for this great service to the working-man in its hands, the

illumination of the man as to his calling. The second, his preparation as a citizen, it is your duty, whatever may have been done for him or not done for him before he comes to you, to handle when he is with you too.

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The school or college which he frequents must do a corresponding service for the young employer, who is in as great danger as the other from his want of education of this kind and is as great a cause of danger. He is not my concern just now, although there are large employers listening to me. I only mention him in a passing way so that our look around may be complete before we settle on our own line. The whole question of keeping in mind, in education, the vocational outlook of the student, whether he is to be duke or farmer, shopkeeper or doctor, manufacturer or millhand, is of course bound up with this question of citizenship teaching; and the high school and the university must make their reckoning with this fact as well as the technical school. It will not do to go on instructing our youth upon the politics and economics of the Roman empire and why *latifundia perdidere Italiam* and the like, and leaving them, at the same time, empty of the least effective idea of the society of their own country and their own time in which they themselves have to play a part fraught with responsibilities. The young employer as well as the young worker must be helped to understand his place in the general perspective. One and the other have to be helped to realise that they have duties to each other—that it is open to neither to plead "I am not my brother's keeper"—and that they have duties to a very important third partner, to wit, the general public of all classes: that this indeed is the predominant partner who is often the predominant victim in the ruinous and anarchic struggles of employers and employed. In other words, one of the chief needs of the time, not merely for employers and employed but for all classes in the country, is better educated leadership on these questions. It is for this reason, I think, all types of schools and colleges should take note of this matter and provide the teaching required. But in this Congress our business is with our own technical schools, whose chief business in turn is with the young working-man, so I will keep my remarks mainly to them.

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Let me come back to the more particular question of dealing with this sort of teaching, teaching for citizenship, in the school. For the best general effect aimed at, that of giving the student, together with the power over his circumstances which skill and knowledge give him, a sane and humane outlook upon his circumstances, it is not the particular course which acts as the vehicle of the idea

that matters most. It is the spirit of the teacher. If the staff of a particular school were animated by the right spirit, and had the right conception of their task, they could produce the desired effects through almost any of the courses they taught. But there is a particular value in the course of citizenship (to give it that name) as a vehicle for this educational idea. Some knowledge of economics and administration, of the functions of capital and labour, of the institutions through which the citizen exercises his public rights and performs his public duties in a free community, is essential for the education of the modern worker as it is for that of every citizen. And we have now in our schools teachers whom the Department have had specially trained in these subjects. The teaching should not be didactic in any moralising sense. The young worker, and for that matter the young employer, will resent being told to be a good boy. That should be done for them elsewhere. You will fail if you proceed in that way and with students of that type.

The process must be that of opening and training their minds and giving them material for thinking themselves. And the teaching should have no bias of a partisan type whatsoever. It should deal in ascertained facts and present them honestly. It should aim at exciting an interest in the students in discovering the honest truth about these matters and at getting them to face the truth without fear and to examine and understand it without prejudice. If it does this, if it creates this interest and imparts this method, it may leave the minds thus prepared to do the rest for themselves. It may proceed through the road of history or of economics or of administration or of institutions or even of biography—it does not matter. Though I am thinking it may be well to bring our teachers of commerce together for some conference and instruction with a view to a model syllabus, yet the good teacher should be encouraged to suggest his own syllabus and adapt it even to the case of individual students. He will probably find it best in this case to start from the concrete and, as far as possible, the familiar. For example, he might take as one topic the history of the trade union itself, with its ancestor the trade guild, directing attention to the side of the guild which insisted on excellence of workmanship, a side rather overlooked in the trade union of to-day—I can imagine a mind-opening course of study, under a competent teacher, upon that theme. Or he might take the history and meaning of a tax and a rate; or the institutions of civic government, their history, their functions, the responsibilities of the representatives of the citizens who carry them on, and of the citizens who elect these representatives; or the technical school in which he was teaching, its significance, its relations with the community, its background—going back to the old apprentice teaching and to the craft guild again; or he might expound the

effects upon prices and wages of the opening up of new sources of food supply or money supply; or the fluctuations of local employment through over-production in meeting a "boom" demand from a distant market, and the origin of the "boom" demand; or he might examine the effects of labour troubles upon a given industry—the old silk industry of Dublin for instance was sadly reduced through labour misunderstandings; and of course he would have much information of a thought-promoting kind to give about capital and labour and their long history and their multifarious relations and their respective functions and responsibilities. And if a teacher were dealing with agricultural students he might, let us say, take such a subject as the history of some of the great declines of tillage and replacements of husbandry by grazing or waste, showing the connexion of these phenomena, both as consequence and cause, with the condition of labour; he might show the expedients, legislative and other, adopted in such times for keeping labour on the land and regulating the wages of labour and for artificially compelling the restoration of tillage; such subjects as the effects of the Black Death upon agriculture, the Statute of Labourers, the Peasants' Revolt, etc.—all of which have a valuable light to shed on the rural labour questions of to-day; or he might take value, thought of in terms of produce utilised on the farm and in the farmer's home, in contrast with value thought of only in terms of cash; and so on. The choice of themes is vast. I am only throwing out a point or two for illustration. If he can use local or national sentiment, of course, all the better; for this is a powerful force, always in operation, and one of the most powerful of all forces for good in education, if only rightly employed.

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With such helps towards a rational understanding of facts and responsibilities in this sphere of conduct we may hope to see dispelled some, at least, of that ignorance, breeder of misunderstanding and passion, which keeps classes locked up fast against each other and which, on the one side or the other, is the main cause of those blind brute struggles in which capital and labour are still allowed to "fight out" their differences to the detriment, moral and material, of the whole community. We may hope that with a rational and humane understanding of relations some mode of adjusting them less unworthy of civilisation will be more easy to find than it has been so far. We may even hope that not only as between capital and labour but as between both and the community there will be some advance towards a common point of view. At any rate so far as labour troubles go, one believes, men will come to hesitate more before provoking the wanton or capricious or intemperate strike or lock-out that destroys the industry of a district and brings misery and tragedy—the tragedy of the fruit of years of patient labour and enterprise gone for naught—

in its train; there will be some moderation of the readiness to make excessive demands and to meet demands with excessive obstinacy; there will be more intelligence in the demands and in the response. One thinks there can be little doubt of at least—as a beginning—a moderating influence.

For this first result — to look no further at present — I rely most, apart from the effect on conscience, upon the operation of this knowledge in the minds of the individuals engaged in the particular industries in shaping a conception of what is suitable as well as reasonable in a particular case. When a man learns something of the varying applications which a principle must receive in varying circumstances he will be less ready to force it blindly, whether it applies or not. When he appreciates the difference, for example, between the conditions of seasonal callings and those which are not seasonal he will not apply to one case demands belonging to the other. He will not, for example, as I see is being done in the case of agricultural labour, ask for the same arrangements as to working hours and leisure for the workers, say, on a dairy farm as the workers in a factory. Since I have mentioned agricultural labour, and since I see these demands appearing, let me illustrate what I mean by a few points from that industry, with which I have had some personal dealing. I wish to see an adequate amount of leisure and recreation for the workers of every description and the increase of all their opportunities for living their lives on a higher plane. This is a reasonable and just cause. But when, say, the worker on a dairy farm asks to have the same complete time off on a Sunday as the town worker, that is, that he should not give any help at all on a Sunday, he ought to know that in doing so he is striking at his own source of employment. God does not give the cow which is rearing a calf a day off on Sunday from producing her milk for the nourishment of her calf and the nourishment of the people. The cow has to be milked morning and evening. If she is not she suffers and her milk goes back. I know personally several farmers in this country, owners of strong dairy herds, who have had to give up dairying, and consequently to reduce tillage—and consequently reduce their employment of labour—because of the insistence of their farm hands upon having their Sunday in the country on the same conditions as their friends the labourers in the town. This is bad all round; the country suffers as well as the parties concerned, and the parties and the country will be helped to understand the significance of such a matter. Another demand of the kind which I see being made is to have the principle of the Shop Hours Act, with its compulsory half-holiday, applied to farms as it has already been applied to the shops in our rural towns and villages. The rural worker is entitled to leisure as fully as the town worker, but he will be helped by the teaching I am advocating to learn that the leisure in each

case, and the mode of paying wages too—you cannot pay, for instance, for watching a farrowing sow or a sick mare quite as you would for tending a spinning machine—must be adjusted on a different plan to suit the different conditions of life and industry in country and in town.

On the other hand, to turn to employers, I know some farmers here and there who from lack of an intelligent conception of their own interests or of their obligations to society, from want of instruction on these matters—I say nothing of sympathy and human brotherhood, though that is at the front of the question—expect to get loyal and hearty service from labourers to whom they will not pay a decent wage and whom they will only employ parts of the year; and yet whom they expect besides to be always at hand when they need them. (I am not speaking of the extra labour of harvest or the like, but of the labour for which there is call on the land all the year round, and of the labourers who cannot live between-times like the hares or the moorhens and who are quitting the country; I have seen new labourers' cottages and plots in some districts for which they cannot now get tenants.) I have heard such farmers complain of the labour they get, and I see them, because of inferior and insufficient labour, using their farms to scarce half their possibilities. They can double their wealth and properly discharge their duty of adding to the wealth of the country when they have been helped to realise the economic value of sheer labour to the land, and have had their public spirit sufficiently enlightened as to the claims of their country and their fellow-men upon their service. Fine is the contrast, and the object-lesson, even to-day, one is glad to say, of the many splendid Irish farmers I know—and such farmers are the greater number of those large enough to employ labour, and their number is growing—who are illustrating this truth, working their farms with courage and intelligence, and served with devotion and skill by well-treated and contented labour.

Such things will certainly be better adjusted all round, I am persuaded, and in all our industries, when we get the understanding and sentiment I describe as to the factors concerned spread among our young workers and young employers of every type. Indeed, on the agricultural side, from which I have taken these last illustrations, such an understanding may be said to be getting spread already to some extent through the teaching of our agricultural schools and winter classes.

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One of the difficulties, I may be told,—indeed, I have been told—of what I am suggesting is that it is hardly possible to expect of teachers that they can escape some partisan bias of one kind or the other on these topics which touch so closely upon controversy. I am

not blind to this difficulty. It is a serious one elsewhere—in England, for example; but even there it must be faced. And in Ireland it must be faced unless we are to shirk the major difficulty—the biassed influences of every kind waiting at the door for the young man, the crude biassed influences into which will you continue sending him forth unequipped? The influence of the trained teacher is, before all, an influence against bias and the rash conclusion. But in Ireland I am quite sure we need have no fear of this difficulty. We have certain conditions which are a guarantee for that—unique conditions, negative and positive, which we shall come more to value as we realise them, some advantages from our humble estate. We are without the immense and violent complexities which their industrial history has left to other countries. Our economic and social state, though offering plenty of scope for work at improving it for many a day to come, and though likely to experience eruptions from time to time, presents a comparatively simple problem and one which is yielding to treatment in a remarkable way. This is particularly true of the rural side, now, after its great revolution, and bound to remain for a considerable time to come if this teaching be imparted, in a state of practical equilibrium; and though the problem on the urban side has been more neglected with us and will become more insistent, still it is a straightforward problem. The temptation for our teachers to get away from the task in hand—humanising the pupil and helping him to think sanely about citizenship—and to get on to polemics, will scarcely exist. And I know from experience—I am speaking from experience—what our teachers are, in our Irish technical and secondary schools, so many of whom we have had the privilege of helping to form ourselves, how true and keen their spirit is when they are set upon work which inspires them. A certain amount of this teaching, I should mention, has been going on for some time but only in connection with some of our commercial and agricultural courses.

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Nor do I expect more from what I am suggesting than I imagine it is reasonable to expect. I speak only of what can be done through education; not of the work of other agencies, such as legislation, municipal action, organisation; and the work of education takes time. What I believe is that, if we can introduce into our schools this sort of teaching which I have tried to indicate we shall imperceptibly bring about a great amelioration in the mental and moral attitude of our people of all classes and grades towards these disturbing but inevitable questions. I think they will more and more come round to look upon the other side of the shield, and that there will be more and more mention and consideration given to duties, including

duty to the country, and that although we still shall hear of rights, they will be spoken of less exclusively and with more qualification than they are at present. I think this will be a good way, one of the best of ways, to mitigate, if not to banish, some of the worst evils that accompany the social-economic movement, class envy, class antipathy, class war. We may hope if not to replace at any rate to temper these things by some sympathy as between class and class; some insight into the true circumstances of one another's lot, the respective pains and advantages, each lot having pains and each advantages; some perception of the true nature of the movement, economic and human, of which all classes are in a sense the sport and the beneficiaries; some re-awakening of the social conscience to the inadequacy of the "cash nexus" as a bond of society; and, in sum, by a common and lively appreciation of the fundamental part Christian ethics has to play in all this humanising and civilising. I know that this educational influence of which I speak can only be exiguous as expressed in a course of citizenship or even in the whole teaching of our technical and agricultural schools. But it will be a leaven; and if our whole educational system in time takes more cognisance of this purpose, and if in that system we hold fast to the privilege which we have secured to us in Ireland to a unique degree nowadays amongst modern nations, the privilege of still having the free teaching of religion at the base of our educational work, then I believe that leaven will be a very potent one. Instruction changes with the change of times, but the education of a people does not change. It still consists, not in the acquisition of information, but, as a great man has put it, in restraint and discipline, in examples of virtue and of justice. It is because I believe that the education of our people will eventually shape itself around these principles if we keep them in mind, wisely adjusting the changes of instruction to the conditions of our time, that I have faith in recommending this next development of our work to your consideration.

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